

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 09751 141613Z

67

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 H-02 AGR-10 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 /039 W

----- 105518

R 141453Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6773

INFO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

UNCLAS ATHENS 9751

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, GR

SUBJ: GREEK IMPORT RESTRICTIONS ON BANANAS

REF STATE 214199

1. THE EMBASSY HAS NOW RECEIVED CORRESPONDENCE POUCHED BY DEPARTMENT AND HAS DISCUSSED GOG IMPORT RESTRICTION ON BANANAS WITH MR. MARURICIDES. LATTER REPORTS THAT ASSERTION IN HIS AUGUST 3 LETTER TO SENATOR KENNEDY THAT EMBASSY HAS "AVOIDED THE ISSUE" OF BANANA IMPORTS APPLIED ONLY TO PERIOD IMMEDIATELY AFTER 1969 AND NOT TO RECENT YEARS. EMBASSY FILES, IN FACT, CONTAIN LETTER FROM MAURICIDES, DATED 1973, THANKING ECON/COMMERCIAL OFFICERS FOR THEIR EFFORTS AT THAT TIME. MAURICIDES AGAIN CONTACTED COMMATT DURING MAY 1976 AND VOLUNTEERED TO SUPPLY BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR EMBASSY USE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH GOG. IN THE INTERIM PENDING RECEIPT OF THESE MATERIALS, COMMATT DISCUSSED ISSUE WITH OFFICIALS OF ISRAELI EMBASSY, WHO ARE ALSO INTERESTED IN EARLY RESUMPTION OF BANANA IMPORTS. MAURICIDES HAS AGAIN PROMISED TO FORWARD MATERIALS ON BANANA ISSUE, AND AMBASSADOR HAS DISCUSSED MATTER WITH MINISTRY OF COORDINATION.

2. CURRENT RESTRICTIONS ON BANANA IMPORTS WERE INSTITUTED IN 1969 WHEN BANANAS WERE TRANSFERRED TO COMMODITY LIST A REQUIRING SPECIAL MINISTERIAL APPROVAL IN ADDITION TO NORMAL IMPORT LICENSES ISSUED BY MINISTRY OF COMMERCE.

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 09751 141613Z

IN THIS CASE, APPROVALS MUST BE ISSUED BY MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE,

AND IN RECENT YEARS ONLY A FEW HAVE BEEN GRANTED IN CASES
OF DISTRESSED SHIPMENTS. EMBASSY HAS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS
RAISED ISSUE WITH GOG OFFICIALS, POINTING OUT THAT SMALL
CRETAN BANANA PRODUCTION DOES NOT MEET DOMESTIC NEEDS AND H
S
IN FACT DECLINED SINCE IMPOSITION OF IMPORT RESTRICTIONS.

3. EMBASSY WILL REPORT RESULTS OF CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS WITH
GOG OFFICIALS. IN EARLIER CONTACTS, GOG HAD MAINTAINED THAT
IMPORT OF BANANAS WOULD HAVE ADVERSE EFFECT ON LOCAL CONSUMPTION
OF PEACHES AND OTHER MAJOR GREEK FRUIT CROPS.
KUBISCH

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